The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives union members and officials the interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains Correspondence information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE— 1 BILLION DOLLARS IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1665 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 10

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

The Supreme Court of the United States had a tough decision to make the other day. It involved the conviction of George Sylvester Viereck, a known pro-Nazi who was found guilty of spreading Hitler's doctrine in this country—with the aid of some Congressmen, let it be said.

In reviewing the case, the Supreme Court found that the letter of the law had not been complied with in Viereck's trial. So, despite the fact that we are engaged in a desperate war against Hitler, the court threw out the conviction of his advocate.

We can imagine the jeering contempt with which the Nazis in Germany greeted this verdict. They consider us softies for our strict regard for law. But we in America can be proud of this decision. In it lives and breathes the spirit of justice.

Now every American worker is called upon to sit in judgment upon a case that presents an even greater test of justice than that which confronted the Supreme Court.

We refer to the execution by the Soviet Government of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, labor leaders who were active in the anti-Nazi, Jewish underground movement in Poland.

Consider the Evidence

Let us constitute ourselves a court to examine the evidence and the issues presented by this case. After all, in America the court of public opinion is the real supreme court.

The evidence at hand is fragmentary, we must admit. We do not know how Erlich and Alter fell into the hands of the Soviet Government. We do not know the testimony submitted against them. We don't even know the exact charges against them, except rather vaguely that they were accused of collaborating with Hitler.

But we do know this—that these men were sincere Jews, that they were sincere Socialists, that they were sincere trade-unionists and that they had conducted a constant underground drive against Hitler in Poland at great risk to their own lives.

How, under such circumstances, they could be found guilty of aiding Hitler is beyond our comprehension.

But we do know that they were convicted and executed. We do know that they are now dead.

And it is our duty to judge not the victims but the kind of Government, the kind of justice, that could condemn them.

In so doing, we must first acknowledge that the Soviet Government is our ally in this war. The people of Russia and the armies of Russia have put up an inspired resistance against the armed might of Hitler. Their fight is our fight in this war.

A Warning For the Future

These facts make it extremely difficult for us to render a decision based on justice and frankness, rather than convenience. It would be easy to say that Stalin's business is his own and none of ours. It would be simpler to wash our hands of the whole business and to forget about it.

But we cannot forget. We cannot acquiesce to murder without becoming accessories.

To us it seems unmistakable that Erlich and Alter were executed not for collaborating with Hitler but because their anti-Soviet trade-union activity made it impossible for them to stomach Stalinism, which once operated in partnership with Hitlerism.

We can understand the type of reasoning which would consider anyone in Stalin's jurisdiction who opposed him guilty of being pro-Nazi. But we cannot agree with such reasoning any more than we could convict an American of treason merely because he disagreed with President Roosevelt.

The murder of Erlich and Alter exposes the bloody hands of the Soviet Government. It exposes the intellectual slavery of the so-called labor movement of Soviet Russia which failed to voice a protest. It is a warning to us for the future.

This may be considered brutal frankness. But when it comes to frankness, we take off our hats to Admiral William H. Standley, United States Ambassador to Russia, who stood up on his hind legs in Moscow and announced for all the world to hear that Stalin has deliberately withheld from the Russian people any mention of the considerable aid this country has given Russia in the war effort.

The Case vs. Labor "Draft"

Washington, D. C.—National service legislation, such as the Austin-Wadsworth "draft labor" bill, is a dangerous, destructive and unsurgical method of solving America's manpower problems, a joint AFL-CIO committee declared.

The group, made up of the labor members of the management-labor policy committee of the War Manpower Commission, stated its views in the following statement:

We have read with some surprise newspaper reports of a letter sent by the Secretary of War Stimson to the chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee endorsing in effect the Austin-Wadsworth bill to draft American labor. The endorsement of this bill is surprising because the manpower problem is so pressing and widespread and the Austin-Wadsworth bill so obviously offers no solution to the basic planning to meet the manpower problem.

It is particularly regrettable that the name and office of the Secretary of War be used in support of the widely propagandised Austin-Wadsworth bill at a time when there is before Congress the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper war mobilization bill which actually does strike at the heart of the war production problem and which offers a fundamentally sound solution to our manpower needs.

The basic approach to our manpower difficulties must obviously seek the most effective utilization of the manpower available in the nation. Effective utilization of our manpower must mean that we know what manpower we need and where we need it. It must mean that we know how many men and women we need in each area and each occupation and how many men and women will be needed over the future months. This must be done of course, the kind of overall planning and programming which can make these needs known and plan appropriate steps for filling them.

Meeting our manpower difficulties means the kind of planning which allocates contracts to the areas where the labor supply problem can be met, the kind of planning which makes sure that meeting the labor supply problem will not raise housing and transportation difficulties, the kind of planning which makes sure that workers on the jobs in which they are now employed are employed under conditions which will maintain their highest possible skills, the kind of planning which arranges for training programs to produce the kinds of skills needed at the places where they are needed.

The War Manpower Commission has been struggling valiantly to meet all of these many facets of the manpower problem. But there are aspects of this problem which are beyond the control of the Manpower Commission. Workers have been brought to areas where labor supply is needed only to find that there is no housing for them in the area and no transportation to carry them to plants. Contracts have been allocated and war industries established or established in areas because of meeting the manpower difficulties and the housing, transportation, drinking water, sanitation and food distribution needs. Defects in programming of production at various stages has resulted in temporary layoffs for lack of some necessary material in the production processes.

Under all these circumstances it is difficult to see how there can be any notion that the nation's manpower difficulties can be met simply by a labor draft measure such as the Austin-Wadsworth bill. This bill makes no suggestion of any plan. It makes no provision for any central coordination and civilian control of the production and planning and manpower agencies of the nation. It calls for nothing but the power to draft labor at a time when the events of that power may simply make matters worse by continuing to draft labor without coordinated production and civilian economy planning.

The Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill on the other hand, by suggesting a central, coordinated and civilian control of our manpower production, civilian economy, and technological mobilization agencies, does offer the kind of approach to our manpower difficulties which promises a sound solution. It offers the kind of approach which, our armed forces should certainly welcome as a final overall total mobilization of the civilian economy in support of our war effort.

The Austin-Wadsworth bill is in effect a measure of desperation. The Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill is a program of constructive solution. The issue is not at all confused or equivocal in this situation. The issue is whether we are to approach our interrelated production and manpower problems on a basis of planned organization, or whether we are simply to exercise power without planning and understanding. Under these conditions, labor will vigorously oppose the Austin-Wadsworth bill as a blow against rather than an aid to the war program.

Gov't Chiefs Urge F. D. R. To Halt NLRB-CIO Raids On AFL Unions

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt was officially informed by the heads of three outstanding war agencies of the Federal Government that CIO raids on war plants where American Federation of Labor contracts exist are a threat to continuing high production.

The warning to the Commander-in-Chief came from the War Department, the Navy Department and the U. S. Maritime Commission.

It followed a meeting with representatives of these agencies held by a delegation from the American Federation of Labor, headed by President William Green.

The labor delegation presented factual records of a "grave situation" resulting from the institution of proceedings against AFL contracts by the National Labor Relations Board in eighteen shipyards and in a number of manufacturing plants. In each case, the National Labor Relations Board is acting upon complaint of CIO unions which hope to replace AFL unions as collective bargaining representatives for the men.

The outstanding "trouble spot," AFL chiefs warned, is the Kaiser shipyards in the northwest.

Output in these yards, they said, has already been affected by the interunion conflict, and by the action of the National Labor Relations Board in pushing proceedings that challenge validity of AFL agreements with the Kaiser management.

AFL chiefs said the board's action has led to unrest in the yards and impairment of Kaiser's amazing production records. They contended that if the board goes through with its case to the "bitter end," conflicts between unions will mean even greater damage to output.

Among other cases of, asserted "raids," cited to the military agencies, was a CIO campaign designed to upset an AFL agreement with the big plant of Basic Magnesium, Inc., at Las Vegas, Nev., employing 10,000 workers.

The AFL spokesmen insisted that in all such instances, where collective bargaining agreements are in effect, the Labor Board should suspend proceedings "for the duration." Representatives of the government agencies agreed to lay the facts and recommendations of the federation leaders before President Roosevelt.

The Basic Magnesium case was described as "explosive" in letters sent by Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins and Chairman Harry A. Millis of the NLRB to Secretary-Treasurer Joseph A. McDonagh of the AFL Metal Trades Department and Secretary Herbert Rivers of the Building Trades Department.

McDonagh and Rivers declared that Basic Magnesium, one of the biggest companies of its kind in the nation, entered into an agreement with AFL unions months ago, carrying the highest wage scales in the Southwest.

Nonetheless, the CIO has sent down a flock of organizers, many of them armed and some of whom have been jailed for illegally carrying weapons," McDonagh asserted. The CIO has also asked the NLRB to institute proceedings against the AFL agreement.

"A tense situation exists," McDonagh said. "Our people there are threatening a strike. Morale is breaking down. We fear serious disturbances may occur. We have informed both the Labor Department and the Labor Board that in this case, and others like it, where satisfactory union agreements are functioning, no proceedings should be undertaken to encourage raiding and imperil the war effort."

War And Treasury Departments Praise Labor Press For War Aid

Washington, D. C.—Two top leaders in the government—Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau—paid tribute to the influence of the labor press in helping to speed the day of victory over the Axis.

"I know of no group better qualified to hammer home the truths of the war situation than the labor press," Patterson declared. "For you speak to, you speak to, the rank and file of loyal, patriotic workers of America who form the backbone of the nation—the backbone of the American army."

Morgenthau asserted that the editors of labor publications are making an "outstanding contribution" to the war effort.

"I have always felt very strongly that the working man and woman understood more what this war was about than anybody else, and that they did not have to be propagandized to let them know what we were fighting against," he said.

"Labor editors have helped to give the workers this understanding, and have followed it up with information on wartime problems which affect them and which call for their energies to win the war and the peace.

"The labor union press is performing a notable wartime service for its readers, particularly in the field of taxes and war bonds."

Altmeyer Urges National Fund For Unemployment Insurance

New York City.—A national system of unemployment insurance, in which the funds of the 48 states and the territories would be pooled, was proposed by Arthur J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Board in an address before a Child Care Conference sponsored by the New York City Welfare Council at the Hotel Roosevelt.

He also urged the extension of old-age insurance to cover agricultural labor, domestic service, public employment and self employment.

A national system of unemployment insurance would wipe out differences in the protection now afforded under separate state laws and the unfair competitive disadvantages placed on employers in states which try to deal adequately with risks of unemployment, Mr. Altmeyer declared.

Dorothy Thompson Hits Anti-Union Campaign of Capt. Rickenbacker

Washington, D. C.—Dorothy Thompson, noted newspaper columnist and recognized expert on the techniques of Fascism, courageously denounced Capt. "Eddie" Rickenbacker as a spokesman for those "who are seeking to take advantage of this war to crush American labor unions." In a syndicated column, Miss Thompson wrote:

"Although Captain Eddie is an able executive, he is not a specialized labor; these laws which seek to bring some order and stability to the rights of workers, organized or unorganized; and the whole structure which makes free collective bargaining possible.

"And for all the faults in our war production, he blames the workers and labor unions exclusively.

"While our men are fighting in Africa and the Pacific, Captain Rickenbacker is organizing their lives for them on their return. He is planning for them the kind of world in which they are going to live.

"The men in the hell holes doing the fighting are not largely corporation executives. They are mostly the sons of American workers.

"Certainly, when the fighting is over, Captain Rickenbacker, he has risked his life to protect, he will demand a share in the wealth of that nation. And he certainly won't get it if he is aligned against the workers who were kept at home."

Labor Unions Unite In War Relief

New York City.—A joint meeting of representatives of the American Federation of Labor, the CIO, and Railroad Brotherhoods, held here to launch a drive for a $4,000,000 war relief fund, was hailed as a forerunner of a united labor movement throughout the country.

Two hundred and fifty representatives of the unions met at a luncheon in the Hotel Commodore to outline plans for the New York Labor War Chest and it was announced that $2,000,000, or half of the first goal, had already been contributed and pledged by the participating unions.

Both Matthew Woll, vice president of the American Federation of Labor, and Sidney Hillman, former vice president of the CIO and president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, called for a united labor movement.

"We are hopeful," said Mr. Woll, "that through this medium in the relief field there may come about a better understanding in the economic field, and the speedier the better—that is, an effort toward complete labor unity."

Mr. Woll said that the joint relief drive was an undertaking that symbolized the friendship that would bring the unions together, and it was confident that ultimately it will grow into a great organization and a permanent one for good. I should regret it if this were only a temporary organization and I hope it will grow into a permanent institution for labor throughout the country."

War Output Breaking All Records, Knox And Patterson Announce

Warships And Merchant Ships Delivered In Record Time And Numbers

Washington, D. C.—All Naval shipbuilding and aircraft production records were shattered in February, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox announced.

He revealed that 150 combat vessels and 700 landing barges were completed and 1,400 planes delivered. More than half of the planes were combat craft, he said.

At the same time, the Maritime Commission announced that American shipyards also smashed all previous records for merchant ship construction in February, with deliveries of 120 new vessels with an aggregate of 1,239,200 deadweight cargo tons.

The new merchantmen are part of the overall program for building 4,880 cargo vessels by the end of 1944. It is believed the bulk of these vessels will be in service by the end of this year.

This is described by Maritime Commission officials as the most prodigious shipbuilding effort in history. It will be equivalent to two-thirds of all the merchant tonnage in the world in January 1941.

Included in the program are 1,800 Liberty ships of 10,500 tons each. Of these, 704 had been delivered into service by March 1 and are traversing the ocean to every battlefront of the United Nations with munitions, planes, food supplies and sometimes troops. On return voyages, these ships head back to America precious cargoes of raw materials.

Vital in protecting the nation's merchantmen against enemy submarines, Secretary of the Navy Knox disclosed that the Navy already has built seventy-score of light destroyers to be used as escorts.

As soon as these new ships are commissioned and put into service, the heavier destroyers will be released for combat duty in the various war zones, he said.

In addition to new naval construction in February, Secretary Knox said, 20 cargo vessels were converted for combat duty.

Naval ships completed in February grossed more than 200,000 tons. All of these ships were delivered far ahead of schedule.

F.D.R. Congratulates AFL Workers For Quick Job On Douglas Dam

Knoxville, Tenn.—President Roosevelt sent a congratulatory message to the AFL workers who completed the construction of the new Douglas Dam of the TVA in 13 months, half the scheduled time.

Describing the construction as an engineering feat, the President lauded "the engineers and workmen who have labored day and night through storm and heat and flood."

"This dedication," he said, "honors every man or woman working with pen or shovel or machine who made it possible to shorten by half the time required for completion of this huge structure.

"We honor the men who have built plants and factories throughout the country where the materials that will forever be a part of Douglas Dam have been produced.

"We honor their work and we dedicate their achievement to a single purpose. Until this war is won, every kilowatt of power their skill and energy and complete devotion has made it possible to create more planes, more tanks and more explosives; the implements of war for our men overseas.

"Let our enemies take note. Douglas Dam shows what a democracy can do."

American Labor Welcomes Ibanez, Chilean Leader, Visiting Capital

Washington, D. C.—A young man from Chile captured the respect and admiration of American labor leaders at a series of luncheons in the nation's capital designed to cement closer relations among the organized labor movements of the Western Hemisphere.

He is Bernardo Ibanez, General Secretary of the Chilean Confederation of Workers, now visiting this country at the invitation of AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray.

He emphasized that the Chilean Confederation of Workers had been the strongest factor in putting pressure on the Chilean Government to break off relations with the Axis and join the family of United Nations.

Throughout Latin America, he said, organized labor is the bulwark of democracy and the chief foe of Fascism.

Much remains to be done, he warned, in the organization of Latin American workers into free and democratic trade union movements. Working and living conditions of labor in most South American nations is still at a terribly low level and industry is conducted on a feudalistic basis, he said.

Relations between the United States and South America would be vastly improved, Senor Ibanez suggested, if labor organizations in this country would extend a helping hand to their fellow workers "south of the border."

This can be done, he declared, through the formation of an active and aggressive Inter-American Federation of Labor which would provide a medium for full exchange of information and a broad program of action.

Secretary-Treasurer George Meany, who acted as host at the luncheon in the absence from the city of President William Green, extended a hearty welcome to Senor Ibanez and offered full cooperation of the AFL with the Chilean Confederation of Workers. Similar sentiments were expressed by Mr. Murray.

Note to Editors

Washington, D. C.—Mats of photographs taken at the joint AFL-CIO luncheon to Senor Ibanez are being prepared and will be distributed free of charge to the labor press on the mailing list of the Labor Publications Division of Labor Weekly News Service.

His youth—he is only 38—vigor and progressive outlook made a favorable impression on his American hosts, as did his staunch adherence to the cause of democracy in this war.

Senor Ibanez gave expression to his views at a press conference at a luncheon in his honor given by the AFL and the CIO before he set out on an inspection tour of war production centers.

Page "Eddie" Rickenbacker!

Washington, D. C.—Efforts of Capt. "Eddie" Rickenbacker and others to drive a wedge between men so vital to the war effort, General Olmstead insisted, it should be a prime aim of the Signal Corps' procurement officers to "preserve the very best relations with the men and women who are working in the factories."

In fairness, it should be stated that generally officers of both the army and navy have not participated in the vicious campaign against labor, directed by Rickenbacker and selfish interests. On the contrary, ranking officers in charge of combat troops as well as those concerned with keeping the army supplied have testified to the "grand job" the nation's workers have done.

Army Planes And Bombs Hit New High Totals, Says War Department

Washington, D. C.—Aircraft production reached the all-time high of 5,500 planes during the short month of February, Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson announced.

More than 70,000 bombs of 1,000-pound size or larger were manufactured in January, he revealed at the same time, and "production is still increasing."

This total, the War Department pointed out, is sufficient to bomb the enemy at the rate of 2,300 bombs a day for 30 days.

Secretary Patterson's announcement was part of a highly encouraging war production report, based chiefly on January figures. Other outstanding items included:

Carbines—more than 58,000.
Garand Rifles—more than 80,000.
Fifty-Caliber Aircraft Machine Guns—87,000.
Twenty-Millimeter Aircraft Cannon—7,000.
Submachine Guns—68,000.

Factories also produced more than 37,000,000 square feet of metal landing mats for air fields.

Only 5,000 planes, 65 per cent of them for combat duty, were produced in January. Thus February, though a shorter month, showed a gain of 500 planes.

"Procurement of equipment for ground and air forces," Patterson said, "has been steadily climbing at an average rate of nearly 100 million dollars a month for the past year. Production for January 1943 was three and a half times the rate of January 1942."

At that, the War Department explained, the January figures were somewhat below December output "as a result of anticipated fluctuations due to year-end adjustments." However, the totals were said to be "in line with the scheduled long-term upward trend."

UNION DONATES MOVIES FOR WAR EFFORT

Hollywood.—Movie goers all over the country will have an opportunity to witness one of labor's many contributions to the war effort—a more intelligent defense of the home front.

Hollywood cartoonists, members of Screen Cartoonists Guild Local 852, AFL, have just turned over to the Office of War Information a 6-minute animated cartoon on "Point Rationing of Food." The film was directed, animated, and photographed by union members on their own time and is now being made into movie houses, with a credit line to Local 852.

Cartoonists volunteered to make the film when they learned that the OPA had no funds to make a graphic explanation of point rationing. So successful is the film that six stills were reproduced in the Sunday Magazine section of the *New York Times* of Feb. 28.

The film, a 16 mm. sound, can be obtained from regular distributors of Office of War Information films and from regional offices of the Office of Price Administration.

NETWORKS GIVE TIME FOR 120 LABOR PROGRAMS

Washington, D. C.—Organized labor leaders took part in 120 broadcasts originated by the four major radio networks in 1942. Most of these were "count-by-count." The time was furnished free of charge by stations affiliated with the networks.

In announcing this figure, the National Association of Broadcasters pointed out that there were many additional regional and local labor broadcasts from individual stations.

Thirty-seven of the network broadcasts were in the "Labor for Victory" series heard each Sunday at 1:15 p.m. Eastern War Time over the NBC network. This series is programmed on alternate weeks by the AFL and CIO.

UNION MEMBER IS CLERK OF INDIANA SUPREME COURT

Indianapolis, Ind.—When Thomas E. Williams, for 28 years member of the Journeymen Barbers International Union at Jeffersonville, Ind., started recently his four-year term as the clerk of the Indiana Supreme and Appellate Courts he won the honor of being the first member of organized labor to be elected to a state office in Indiana.

His nomination by the Republican state convention made him the first unionist to be nominated to a state office by any major political party in the Hoosier state. In the November elections he polled the highest plurality of any of the winning Republican candidates on the state ticket. His plurality was 134,808.